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*BOROUGH OF WASHINGTON, WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY*

*WASHINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL MINUTES*

*May 05, 2020*

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The regular meeting of the Borough Council of Washington, Warren County, New Jersey was held via ZOOM live stream at 7:00 P.M.

Roll Call: Conry, Cox, Noone, Norris, Valle and Higgins.

Also Present: Matthew Hall, Manager  
Laurie A. Barton, Borough Clerk  
Tara St. Angelo, Attorney  
Natasha Turchan, CFO

Absent: Chelsea Duchemin

Mayor Higgins led everyone in the flag salute.

Mayor Higgins read the following statement into record:

“The requirements of the Open Public Meetings Law, 1975, Chapter 231, have been satisfied in that adequate notice of this meeting has been published in the Star Gazette and posted on the bulletin board, borough website and Facebook stating the time, place and purpose of the meeting as required by law.”

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mel Thiel, BID Executive Director, gave an update on the grant that the BID received. Applications are still being taken for vendors for the farmers market. Due to guidelines put out by the County Health Department, spaces for vendors will be reduced to 35 instead of 70. They will have two food trucks coming in. They are combining the Green and Arts Craft festivals into one festival. More information can be found on the BIDS website at [washingtonbid.org](http://washingtonbid.org)

Hearing no further public comment, motion made by Noone and seconded by Conry to close the public portion, all were in favor.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

Manager Hall started the discussions explaining Governor Murphy's executive order concerning a deadline extension for property taxes. Manager Hall explained his concern stating that municipalities do not get the reprieve from paying the school and county taxes late.

CFO, Natasha briefed council on the current situation of taxes and how they are paid regarding County and School obligations. She stated that the borough could go to May 15<sup>th</sup> without any impact to the borough.

Mayor Higgins explained if the borough were to extend the grace period further they would have to take out a tax anticipation note.

It was the consensus of Council to extend the deadline to May 15, 2020.

Motion made by Conry and seconded by Noone to approve Resolution 2020-77.

Roll Call: Conry, Cox, Noone, Norris, Valle and Higgins.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0

Motion passes.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 2020 –77**

#### **RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF WASHINGTON, COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, INSTITUTING A GRACE PERIOD CONCLUDING ON May 15, 2020 FOR THE PAYMENT OF SECOND- QUARTER PROPERTY TAXES.**

**WHEREAS**, the Governor of the State of New Jersey issued Executive Order 103 on March 9, 2020, declaring a Public Health Emergency and a State of Emergency due to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, said Public Health Emergency and State of Emergency continue to exist; and

**WHEREAS**, property taxpayers may be suffering from financial hardships as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, including but not limited to, loss or drop of income or unexpected expenses due to necessary health care; and

**WHEREAS**, under N.J.S.A. 54:4-67(a), a municipality may fix the rate of interest to be charged for the nonpayment of taxes, assessments, or other municipal liens or charges, on or before the date when they would become delinquent, and may provide that no interest shall be charged if payment of any installment is made within the tenth calendar day following the date upon which the same became delinquent, thereby establishing a grace period running through May 11, 2020 for the second-quarter property taxes, as to the Borough of Washington's budget cycle; and

**WHEREAS**, Executive Order 130 (2020) was issued on April 28, 2020, which authorized municipalities to establish a grace period extension no later than May 11, 2020 for payment of second-quarter property taxes and that any provisions of N.J.S.A. 54:4-66(a), N.J.S.A. 54:4-66.1(a) and N.J.S.A. 54:4-67(a) inconsistent with Executive Order 130 (2020) were suspended for the duration of the Public Health Emergency; and

**WHEREAS**, it is the desire of the governing body to adopt a resolution instituting a grace period of May 15, 2020 for the payment of second-quarter property taxes, to assist the property taxpayers of the Borough of Washington.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the governing body of the Borough of Washington, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. That the governing body does hereby institute a grace period of May 15, 2020 for the payment of second-quarter property taxes for properties in the Borough, in accordance with the provisions of Executive Order 130 (2020).
2. That a certified copy of this Resolution shall be forwarded by the Municipal Clerk to the Director of the Division of Local Government Services in the Department of Community Affairs within three (3) business days of the adoption of this Resolution.

3. That a certified copy of this Resolution shall be forwarded to the Tax Collector, Chief Financial Officer, and the Township Manager.

**MINUTES**

Motion made by Conry and seconded by Noone to approve the minutes of April 21, 2020.

ROLL CALL: Conry, Cox, Noone, Norris, Valle, Higgins.

Ayes: 6, Nays: 0  
Motion Carried.

**VOUCHERS AND CLAIMS**

Motion made by Conry seconded by Valle to pay the vouchers and claims.

Discussion: Councilwoman Cox asked if any progress on looking into purchasing thick mats instead of having to pay a vendor to have mats replaced and cleaned at the DPW.

Councilwoman Noone inquired about a bill from CPM Engineering.

ROLL CALL: Conry, Cox, Noone, Norris, Valle, Higgins.

Ayes: 5, Nays: 1 (Cox)  
Motion Carried.

**RECAP**

Manager Hall will follow up with the tax and sewer clerk tomorrow with the resolution of what the borough is doing with the tax deadline extension. This information will also be posted on the borough's website.

**COUNCIL REMARKS**

Councilwoman Noone gave the following remarks:

- Wished all residents to stay safe and take care of each other.

Councilwoman Valle gave the following remarks:

- Noticed on social media about dog feces in the pocket park.

Deputy Mayor Conry gave the following statements:

- Wished everyone to stay healthy and be safe. The seniors aren't meeting anymore due to this virus. A refund was received from the bus company for the bus trip that was booked, but had to be canceled.
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Attorney St. Angelo gave the following update:

- Affordable Housing is moving towards a compliance hearing-it is on the calendar in front of Judge Miller. The property owner has come to an agreement with zoning. They are dropping their insistence of septic standards. A new zoning ordinance will be at the next meeting or soon thereafter for Council to review.
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Borough Clerk, Laurie Barton gave the following remarks:

- Discussed the latest executive order from Governor Murphy involving marriage applications; they can now be done virtually without coming in person.

Mayor Higgins gave the following remarks:

- Stated for everyone to stay safe and if anyone needs anything feel free to call him, Laurie or Matt, to let everyone know how you're doing.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Hearing no further business, a motion was made by Valle seconded by Conry to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 pm.

Ayes: 6; Nays: 0  
Motion Carried.

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Mayor David Higgins

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Laurie A. Barton, Borough Clerk